

*Commonwealth of Virginia*  
*Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe*

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**Office of the Governor**

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**Governor McAuliffe Announces \$4.23 Million in Virginia Land  
Conservation Grants**

**RICHMOND** — Governor Terry McAuliffe today announced [Virginia Land Conservation Foundation](#) (VLCF) grants totaling \$4.23 million for 23 projects which will help protect 4,390 acres in the commonwealth. VLCF grants are used by private land trusts, local governments, and state agencies to protect and acquire significant lands in the following categories: farmland, forestry, historic resources, natural areas, and parks and open space.

“The projects these grants will fund protect biodiversity, working farms, forest lands, green space, and historic resources, while enhancing public access to these valuable lands,” **said Governor McAuliffe**. “Protecting Virginia’s natural assets is an important part of building a healthy economy and these grants will help advance that important work in every corner of the Commonwealth.”

The VLCF board is composed of 19 members that are appointed by the Governor, the Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates. The board includes the Secretary of Natural Resources, who serves as chair, and the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry.

“This funding is crucial in continuing conservation goals throughout the commonwealth,” **said Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Molly Ward**, who chairs the board. “These funds will help protect Virginia’s special places and resources for generations.”

Grant applications were reviewed by an interagency workgroup before being passed, with recommendations, to the foundation’s board. Administrative support for the VLCF is provided by the Virginia Department of Conservation.

“VLCF has selected a great mix of awardees, and I am proud that the Department of Conservation and Recreation can help with such impactful projects,” **said DCR Director Clyde Cristman**.

The following list provides the project name, requesting organization, a brief description and VLCF funding amounts for the approved grants.

<b>Farmlands</b>				
<i>Project name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Requesting organization</i>	<i>Grant Amount</i>	<i>Description</i>
Long Lane	Loudoun County	Northern Virginia Conservation Trust	\$187,695	This grant will help partially fund the purchase of a conservation easement on an active 99-acre family farm that raises pastured livestock. The project is proposed to be a Natural Resources Conservation Service Agricultural Land Easement to be co-held by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust and Loudoun County. Protection of this property will enhance water quality with approximately 1,500 linear feet of permanent vegetated riparian buffers with appropriate

				livestock exclusion along an intermittent stream and conserve 91 acres of prime and statewide important agricultural soils that will remain available for agricultural use.
Valley Pike Farm	Rockingham County	Valley Conservation Council Inc.	\$116,100	This project is the partial purchase of a conservation easement on an active 86-acre family farm that raises poultry, beef cattle, corn, soybeans, barley and hay. Valley Pike Farm Inc. is a Virginia Century Farm that has been in continuous ownership and operation by the same family for more than 100 years. Protection of this property will conserve 78 acres of prime and statewide important agricultural soils on a farm that utilizes best management practices to protect the soil and improve water quality within the Smith Creek watershed.
McClevey Farm	Stafford County	Stafford County	\$146,205	This grant will help partially fund the purchase of a conservation easement on 80 acres of farm and forest land. The property has been identified as a priority parcel for conservation by the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program because of its proximity to Marine Corps Base Quantico. Protection of the farm will protect 47 acres of prime and statewide important agricultural soils. Water quality will be protected by approximately 7,900 linear feet of permanent vegetative buffer along perennial and intermittent streams and wetland.
<b>Forestlands</b>				
Game Lake Refuge at Joseph Pines Preserve	Sussex County	Meadowview Biological Research Station	\$175,000	This award will help fund the fee-simple purchase of a 190-acre addition to the Joseph Pines Preserve. The property lies between the preserve and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Game Refuge Lake. The property is 98 percent forested, classified as high forest conservation value. Nearly 10,000 feet of streams

				<p>will be protected by permanent buffers, including 7,920 feet of intermittent drainage that flow directly into Game Refuge Lake. Planned management will support the expansion of bobwhite quail habitat, and it will be fully available to the public for all forms of outdoor recreation, supporting the “most-needed goals” identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan.</p> <p>This purchase will also support interagency longleaf pine restoration efforts in Virginia through the Virginia Longleaf Pine Cooperators Group, and its goal to re-establish longleaf pine across its native range in Virginia.</p>
Jack Mountain Tracts Easement	Highland County	Virginia Department of Forestry	\$225,000	<p>This project will help protect 1,658 acres of forestland on two tracts with an open space easement. The tracts occupy the upper slopes and 4 miles of summit along Jack Mountain, the 12<sup>th</sup> highest peak in Virginia and the third highest in Highland County.</p> <p>The property contains 1,600 acres of forestland and lies in the upper reaches of the James River watershed and collectively contains more than 31,000 feet of intermittent streams that flow directly into the Bullpasture River. The site contains eight significant natural heritage resources confirmed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation Natural Heritage Program, including two G2/S1 element occurrences and stands of red spruce (<i>Picea rubens</i>), considered a diminished tree species in Virginia by the State Forester. The easement will establish a large habitat protection area that permanently safeguards these natural heritage resources.</p> <p>Given the prominence of Jack Mountain, slope and summit location on the mountain, and size, the property contributes significantly to the surrounding viewshed.</p>

				The easement will protect miles of highly visible and undeveloped mountaintop and slopes.
White Easement	Southamp-ton County	Virginia Department of Forestry	\$50,000	<p>This grant will help partially fund the purchase of an open space easement that will protect forest and farmland. The property contains nearly a mile and a half of frontage along the Meherrin River. This stretch has been identified for future study as a state-designated Scenic River.</p> <p>The easement contains 545 acres, 450 acres of which is forestland and the rest farmland. Eighty-six percent of the forestland is classified as having high forest conservation value. About half the forestland is under active management; the other half is composed of tupelo or cypress wetlands along the river.</p> <p>According the Department of Conservation and Recreation Natural Heritage Program, the property supports two natural heritage resources associated with the wetlands. The easement will establish a habitat protection area over these wetlands. This area will also safeguard the river frontage and nearly 10,000 feet of streams that flow directly into the river.</p>
<b>Historic Resources</b>				

Turner Tract at the North Anna Battlefield	Hanover County	Civil War Trust	\$238,800	<p>The funding will help the applicant acquire 126 acres containing farmland, wooded cover, wetlands and 1,278 linear feet of frontage on the North Anna River. The property lies within the core area of the Civil War Battle of North Anna (1864). Additional historically significant resources associated with the property include the circa mid-19<sup>th</sup> century brick dwelling known as the “Fox House/Ellington,” which played a pivotal role in the 1864 battle, a circa early 19<sup>th</sup> century brick school house, a cemetery, earthworks and the location of the historic Chesterfield Bridge crossing. The property was subject to a court-ordered sale in mid-July 2017. The intention is to rehabilitate the dwellings and interpret the property with signage, pathways, and tours. The project will protect an architecturally and historically significant site, provide public access and encourage heritage tourism.</p>
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Bell House	Winchester	Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation	\$209,996	<p>This grant will help protect a 0.68-acre lot that lies within the core area of the Third Winchester (Opequon) Battlefield (1864) and is within the study area of three additional Civil War Battlefields: First Winchester (1862), Second Winchester (1863) and Second Kernstown (1864). In addition to its Civil War history, the property is distinguished by a historically significant 19<sup>th</sup> century Federal style dwelling that is a contributing resource to the Winchester Historic District, which is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places. The dwelling, known as the “Bell House,” was present at the time of the battle. Grounds on the property are open to the public for self-guided tours, and the dwelling is utilized for educational purposes, events and conferences. The project will protect an architecturally and historically significant site, provide public access and encourage heritage tourism.</p>
Clinedinst/Crim Greenway	Shenandoah County	Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation	\$155,439	<p>This project will protect a 2-acre parcel within the core area of the Civil War Battle of New Market (1864). The parcel is distinguished by a circa 1882 historic frame dwelling that is a contributing resource to the New Market Historic District, which is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places. A 1.23-acre portion of the property is open space land that contains an historic dry-laid stone wall. The intention is to incorporate the property into a pedestrian greenway trail that will provide a direct link between the Virginia Military Institute Hall of Valor Museum and the New Market Historic District, allowing visitors to follow the flow of the battle. The project will protect an architecturally and historically</p>

				significant site, provide public access to a pedestrian greenway trail and encourage heritage tourism along U.S. Route 11, a Virginia Byway.
Lyon Farm	Shenandoah County	Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation	\$154,283	This grant will help protect a 62-acre parcel within the core area of the Civil War Battle of Fisher's Hill (1864) as well as the study area of the Cedar Creek Battlefield (1864). Lyon Farm was near the center of Confederate earthworks that spanned the Fisher's Hill Battlefield and contained Gordon's Hill, used as a key artillery position during the battle. Portions of these sites and features remain intact on the property. The property fronts Battlefield Road, a Virginia Byway, and contains farmland actively pastured for cattle, approximately 12 acres of wooded cover. The intention is to incorporate the property into its 12-mile long publicly accessible Valley Pike and Fisher's Hill pedestrian trail system, which links the Fisher's Hill Battlefield with the Belle Grove and Cedar Creek National Historical Park.
Malvern Hill Farm	Charles City and Henrico counties	Capital Region Land Conservancy	\$141,482	This award will contribute to the fee-simple acquisition of 435 acres, which is part of the larger 871-acre Malvern Hill Farm property. The property lies within the core and study areas of the Civil War Battle of Malvern Hill (1862), Glendale (1862) and First Deep Bottom (1864). It is also listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places, primarily for the archaeological and architectural significance of the brick ruins of the late 17 <sup>th</sup> century manor house present during the 1862 battle, but destroyed in a 1905 fire. Malvern Hill also

				witnessed the encampment of Gen. Marquis D. Lafayette in 1781 and the Virginia Militia during the War of 1812. The property contains prime soils, high conservation value forest cover and perennial streams, and it fronts Route 5, a Virginia Byway. The Virginia Capital Trail also runs through the property.
<b>Natural Areas</b>				
Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve Addition	Montgomery County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$53,500	This award will allow for the acquisition of 2 acres along the South Fork Roanoke River adjacent to Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve. Although small, the subject property is within a mapped Conservation Site, which has the highest possible biodiversity ranking in Virginia and is expected to support long-term resiliency of the already protected and highly significant lands. The tract is directly adjacent to the existing preserve, lying just below a significant mapped occurrence of a globally rare “Ridge and Valley Dolomite Glade,” and a population of the federally endangered Smooth Coneflower ( <i>Echinacea laevigata</i> ). This acquisition will extend resource protection to the banks of the South Fork Roanoke River.

Mount Joy Pond Natural Area Preserve Addition	Augusta County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$316,400	With this grant, 85 acres will be added to the existing preserve. This project is expected to improve resiliency of one of the world's best examples of a Shenandoah Valley sinkhole pond, populations of at least six significantly rare plants (including two federally threatened species), and a population of the state endangered Tiger Salamander. The tract will also protect forests of high conservation value and part of a large block of intact forested cover, mapped as one of Virginia's "outstanding ecological cores." It will also protect approximately 4,225 feet of streams. The tract will build connectivity to the adjacent George Washington National Forest, most of which has been designated as "Special Biological Area" in recognition of biodiversity significance. Protecting the tract will provide hydrological and management buffer to support continued fire management on the existing preserve.
Antioch Pines Natural Area Preserve Addition	Isle of Wight County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$419,900	This is to purchase 142 acres. The property shares a long common boundary with the existing preserve and is especially important as a "smoke buffer" to support the active controlled burn program. Forested areas on the tract are considered to have "very high" value by the Virginia Department of Forestry's Forest Economics Model, and they include high priority area for longleaf pine restoration. The property has approximately 8,549 feet of streams and 13 acres of wetlands and supports common wildlife game species. It will also eventually provide habitat for declining species, such as northern bobwhite.

Camp Branch Wetlands Natural Area Preserve Addition	Floyd County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$100,000	This is to assist with the purchase cost of a fee-simple acquisition of 76 acres. The parcel shares nearly a half mile of boundary with the existing preserve and is central to protecting three imperiled species there, including the globally rare Appalachian snaketail ( <i>Ophiogomphus incurvatus incurvatus</i> ) dragonfly. The tract includes 3,171 feet of streams and an estimated 15 acres of wetlands.
Magothy Bay Natural Area Preserve Migratory Bird Habitat Restoration Enhancement	Northampton County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$398,400	This is to acquire 161 acres in two parcels near the southern end of the Delmarva Peninsula. Each fall, the southern tip of Northampton County supports one of the largest concentrations of land birds along the East Coast. Tens of millions of birds, comprising nearly 200 species that represent about 70 percent of all breeding bird species in North America, pass through during fall migration. As a major stopover area, these birds need food and cover before crossing open water and flying south. Existing farm fields provide little direct benefit to these species, so the Natural Heritage Program and its partners actively restore such areas to native vegetation to provide critical forage and natural cover from predators. Proximity to Kiptopeke State Park and existing preserves provides an excellent step toward forging landscape connectivity between the protected areas. This project will create substantially improved habitat for migratory birds.

Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve Addition	Halifax County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$174,200	This is to acquire 69 acres. This preserve is designed to protect one of the most significant conservation sites in the piedmont of Virginia and one of the most diverse and significant botanical assemblages in all of Virginia. The site has the highest diversity of wildflowers known in the Virginia Piedmont and provides habitat for 12 species of plants and one species of butterfly that are rare in the state. Of special significance is one of only two known populations in the world for Tall Barbara's Buttons ( <i>Marshalli legrandii</i> ). The tract directly adjoins the existing preserve, with which it shares nearly 3,200 feet of boundary, and fills an unprotected gap between the preserve and the nearby Kerr Reservoir land, which is protected and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>				
Carvins Cove Connector	Roanoke County	Roanoke County Parks, Recreation and Tourism	\$69,980	This multifaceted project involves acquisition of 2.75 acres on Timberview and Dutch Oven roads to provide a trailhead with restroom and trailhead amenities; a conservation easement acquisition of 2 miles of right-of-way 40 feet wide for the creation of a greenway from Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail to trails within Carvins Cove Nature Reserve; the acquisition by donation of 200 acres of forested property adjacent to the trail, which includes a 4,000-foot perennial stream; and acquisition by donation of 35 acres adjacent to Dutch Oven Road, which has 3,600 feet of frontage along Mason Creek where fishing, wading and kayaking will be made possible.

Catharine M. Grey Preserve	Accomack County	The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Chapter	\$321,000	Funding will help acquire a 127-acre property near the mouth of the Onancock River for the creation of a nature preserve. Adjacent to Parker's Marsh Natural Area Preserve, the property will be open year-round for shoreline fishing, environmental education and nature study, kayaking and hiking. Hunting will be allowed. The property lies along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Onancock Water Trail.
Pohick Bay Regional Park Stribling Acquisition	Fairfax County	Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority	\$400,000	This is to acquire a 3-acre inholding within Pohick Bay Regional Park adjacent to the Potomac River, an American Heritage River. Acquiring the property will protect land that is part of a regionally significant conservation corridor and provide public access for water based recreation. There is potential for trail development, picnicking and nature exploration.
Riverview Walk Park	City of Franklin	City of Franklin	\$45,500	Funding will help acquire 22 acres along the Blackwater River for use as a public Riverwalk Park. Approximately 6 acres of the property is upland and will be used to develop a park for fishing, kayaking, walking, unstructured play, nature observation and picnicking.
Culpeper Crossing Tract	Culpeper County	Civil War Trust	\$82,159	This money will be used to help buy a 12.37-acre property along the scenic Rappahannock River. The property also has frontage along James Madison Highway, which is a component of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground American Byway. Following acquisition, the intention is to restore and interpret the tract.

Blackwater Scenic River Corridor Protection	Isle of Wight County	Department of Conservation and Recreation	\$57,761	Funding will be used to help protect 165 acres making up 2 miles of river frontage along the east bank of the Blackwater River, a state designated Scenic River. When combined with the adjacent Antioch Pines Natural Area Preserve, nearly 5 contiguous miles of river frontage “viewshed” along the east bank of the river will be protected. The project would protect forests of “very high” value, according to the Department of Forestry (VDOF), as well as the national champion overcup oak ( <i>Quercus lyrata</i> ). All riparian and bottomland forests present will be protected in perpetuity, thus contributing significantly to the preservation of this scenic and wild waterway. This will also better enable recreation use of the river. About half the tract is an upland sandy soil ridge, which will be restored to longleaf pine as part of an ongoing partnership with VDOF and several other agencies and organizations.
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*Note: The dollar figures given reflect only the state grant amount and not the total cost of the project.*

[Full Release](#)

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